The Divine Mission of Joseph Smith

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Joseph Smith was the first president and prophet of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, popularly known as the "Mormon" Church. That he was an extraordinary man is conceded by friend and foe. Steadily, his tremendous service to mankind is being recognized; and men stand gratefully before the labors of his life. His teachings form a far-flung ensign of truth. His life and the results of his labors are convincing evidences of his divine mission.

A Restorer and Teacher

Joseph Smith was a restorer of the pure and uncorrupted gospel of Jesus Christ. At no time did he declare that he brought a new message of salvation to the world; his mission was to restore and declare, to expound and enlarge the old truth, which has always been part of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Joseph Smith was also an interpreter of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The accounts in the Holy Bible are but outlines of the labors and teachings of the Savior; and the commentaries by the apostles, which constitute the latter part of the New Testament, are fragmentary and incomplete. Joseph, the Prophet, gave to the world in this day a large and rich interpretation of the gospel of Jesus Christ; he made the teachings of the Savior clear to all, and he

showed how the gospel, devised for human joy, may be applied every day in the affairs of mankind.

Joseph, A Great Issue

Joseph Smith as the Founder of the Church, under divine inspiration, is a great issue of "Mormonism." Once convinced that he was divinely inspired, a person may accept all of "Mormonism," all of the truths that "Mormon" doctrine and history, those who have shown themselves honest and fearless, declare without exception that Joseph Smith is the most important earthly figure of the Church. To Joseph Smith came the marvelous first vision; upon him the Priesthood was conferred; he translated the Book of Mormon by "the gift and power of God"; it was he who was directed by the Lord to organize the Church; and then, through him was revealed the body of doctrine for the guidance of the Church. Those who have studied him without prejudice, have come without exception to the conclusion that once he is accepted as a man who saw God and who was directed by the Lord, the principles that he taught must also be accepted as being of divine origin.

Baffles the Wise

The achievements of Joseph Smith are much greater than those of ordinary men; they appear to transcend usual human powers, and cannot be explained in terms of common experience. Many men, not members of the Church have made that very statement. They have stood baffled before the power of Joseph Smith. We quote frequently the statements of Josiah Quincy, famous mayor of Boston, of an illustrious family of Massachusetts, who visited Joseph Smith, in 1844, soon after young Quincy had graduated from Harvard college. In his old age, this highly educated man, who had learned to know the world, the nature of greatness and

the ways of mortality, told the story of his meeting with Joseph Smith. He closed his story with these words:

> " have endeavored to give details of my visit to the "Mormon" Prophet with absolute accuracy. If the reader does not know just what to make of Joseph Smith I cannot help him out of the difficulty. I myself stand helpless before the puzzle."

Joseph came, untaught by man, into a world which lay in darkness, and did work which cannot be understood or interpreted by common means. Such a man commands the attention of honest, truth-seeking men.

How to Win a Testimony

A testimony of the divine mission of Joseph Smith, a living, enduring testimony, may be won by any man. In his own life the Prophet has given us the key. If we are to obtain a testimony of any truth we must first desire the testimony; then learn to understand the truth in question; then practice that which has been learned; and before and during the study and practice we must be in close communion with our heavenly Father and pray to him for help. Out of such prayer, study and practice, the testimony of the truth will come as an inspiration and gift from the Lord. Every person who studies the life and works of Joseph Smith, practices that which he taught, and sincerely prays for guidance, will come out of the search with a vital testimony of the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith. When man does his part, a testimony comes as a gift of God. Naturally however, a man must be willing to accept the truth, though it conflicts with all his former beliefs. The precious testimony, the indestructible knowledge, of the truth of the gospel must be to him the most desirable thing of life.

The High Order of His Life

It will help establish the testimony of the divine

mission of this great man, to know that Joseph Smith, viewed at any point, from any angle, in any position, always measures up to the demands of truth, as revealed in human experience. For example, his personal life was that of a prophet. He lived as the prophets of old have lived, honestly and sincerely, but misunderstood, hounded, persecuted, and at last his life was taken. His life story reads as do those of the prophets in holy writ. His experience was that of every teacher who attempts to turn men and women from easy walks of near truth into the paths of full truth. Physically, he was a magnificent man; in intellect, lofty and commanding; in spirit, in spite of persecution, disaster and poverty, kindly and gentlemanly. He was courageous, and dared to battle for the right. All who knew him have testified to the kindly strength, mingled with undaunted courage that made him a great soul. The honor of his character was ever above reproach, even among those who opposed him. As son, husband, father, friend, and neighbor, even as foeman, he was beloved. He tells how he lived:

"Sectarian priests cry out concerning me and ask, 'Why is it that this babbler gets so many followers and retains them?' I answer: 'It is because I possess the principle of love. All that I offer the world is a good heart and a good hand.' "

Truth, His Weapon and Reward

No personal reward such as men usually seek was promised by his work. The fact that he went through life gladly, meeting difficulties without hesitation, and asking for no personal consideration, is evidence of his sincerity and unselfish devotion to that which he held to be the eternal truth. His life's labor was to learn the truth and to teach it. To possess truth and to have others possess it, became his reward.

A traveler who visited Nauvoo, about 1843, wrote a book about the Prophet in which he said:

"If anything can tend to encourage the supposition that Joseph Smith was a sincere enthusiast, and that he had strong and invincible faith in his own high, pretentious and divine mission, it is the probability that unless supported by such feelings, he would have renounced the unprofitable and ungrateful task, and sought refuge from persecution and misery in private life and honorable industry. * * * It cannot be denied that he was one of the most extraordinary persons of his time * * * whose name, whatever he may have been whilst living, will take its place among the notabilities of the world."

His life was significant to all who met him, because he spoke with authority as one who knew truth. He declared over and over again that his weapon was truth; and in words of splendor he said:

"I combat the errors of ages; I meet the violence of mobs; I cope with illegal proceedings from excessive authority; I cut the Gordian knot of powers, and meet the problems of universities, with truth—diamond truth."

That is the high ideal which in every human activity is moving our civilization onward.

A Material Builder

Joseph Smith was an outstanding material leader. A tremendous labor was accomplished by the Prophet in and about the city of Kirtland, Ohio. The temple there, still standing, is mute evidence of the powerful material as well as spiritual leadership of the "Mormon" prophet. He founded Nauvoo, the largest city of its time in Illinois, with schools and university and the other factors of civilization. He built temples and laid out cities; he planned for the temporal welfare of his people, through agriculture and industrial development. He looked into the future and saw, as no other man of his generation, the possibilities of the Great West, and the importance of the country west of the Missouri as a necessary part in the building of our Republic. He asked the government to give him one hundred thousand men for western conquest, so that the way might be opened for the settlement of the country beyond the Rocky Mountains. He laid before the people of that day the

picture of Western development, which actually has occurred.

The Church that he organized, compact and serviceable to all, the manner of its growth and development, the firmness with which the members cling to it, all in the face of opposition, often furious, come as evidences of the power and sound leadership of the Prophet. Today, men of thought give consideration to the fruits of the Church and admit that its structure is well nigh perfect. More and more, the inherent ability of the Church to help and direct its members in all righteous endeavors is being recognized and valued. Joseph Smith was an incomparable leader of men and builder for human welfare.

The Spiritual Teacher

However, other men have been of pure character; other men have done great material deeds; other men have built institutions that have lasted throughout the years. Not by such tests alone is built a testimony of the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith. They only confirm the larger truths. The Prophet's greatness lies in his mission as a spiritual leader. Four events of huge spiritual meaning form the cornerstones of evidence of the divine inspiration of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

First: The initial vision, when Joseph was fourteen years old, in which God in person declared to him, "This is my beloved Son, hear him." At that time in the history of the world God had become in the minds of the people an attenuated spirit, spread throughout the universe, nowhere present, everywhere present, nothing in particular and everything in general. In such a theological age the Prophet Joseph Smith declared that he had seen God, a person, who had spoken to him. He taught that men may communicate with God, and that God does speak to his children. It was

like a shaft of light in a dark cloud of error. It was a message, whether acknowledged or not, which has shaken civilization and mankind since that day in 1820. His testimony is with us:

> "It is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God, and to know that we can converse with him as one man converses with another." "I know God. I have gazed upon the glory of God and the visions of eternity." "The Glory of God is Intelligence."

Such knowledge was then the dire need of the world; and is the greatest need of the world today. The simple story of that Vision which lies at the foundation of the restoration of the Gospel in our day, is one of the most convincing records of all time.

Second: The translation of the Book of Mormon. This Book sets forth that the love of the Lord covers the whole earth; that all men are his children; that he speaks in many ways and to divers people, according to his own mind and will, and that there are scriptures besides those which have been revealed in the Bible. The Book of Mormon came as a new revelation to the world, in full harmony with the revelation of God himself in the First Vision. In the Book of Mormon is the pure gospel of the Son of God, freed from the errors of translation and corruption that have attended other such books. The integrity of the Book; its doctrines; its historical data—all form an evidence of its divine origin. The years have strengthened the claims for the Book of Mormon.

Third: The establishment of the Church. It is an organization resting on divine authority, endowed with Priesthood, which declares that a great purpose runs through human life; that the Lord directs the working out of that great purpose, and in so doing has ordained men with power and authority to carry out his purposes. Thus, the "Mormon" prophet set up a Church with divine authority, under direct instruction from the Almighty. Uncertainty was removed; cer-

tainty was established; Priesthood traceable to God was restored, and the Church established was God-made, not man-made. Such a message was needed by a world with a diversity of churches, representing the personal opinions of the founders.

Fourth: The body of doctrine contained in the revelations given through the Prophet Joseph Smith. These revelations are full of wonderful truths. They are particularly marvelous, because each one says or implies: "Thus saith the Lord." They are not the words of Joseph Smith; they are not his opinions; they are not the doctrines he thought would be good; but they are the words of the Almighty. In them the Lord directs, through the Prophet Joseph, that this is to be done, or that this is the truth.

These four cornerstones if properly built upon will enable every honest soul who prays, then studies and practices the truths they contain, to secure an abiding knowledge of the truth of the mission of Joseph Smith. Each one reveals a power beyond that of man.

The Doctrinal Teacher

Joseph Smith was a mighty doctrinal teacher. All that he taught is strictly Biblical. Opponents who attempt to unhorse "Mormonism" by quoting the Bible never succeed. Whoever has tried it once, seldom tries it again. The doctrine of the Bible is the doctrine of the restored gospel. Moreover, the doctrine of the restored gospel is a comprehensive, complete and well organized system of thought, a philosophy; not a set of unrelated doctrinal laws—the Word of Wisdom here, tithing there, something else somewhere else—but a series of principles so held together that they have a beginning and an end, and form one coordinated, complete whole. No other religious system approaches the completeness of the "Mormon" doctrine. That is one reason why all classes of people are attracted and held together by the teachings of Joseph Smith.

Pre-Existence

Let us illustrate. Within a few years of the coming of Joseph Smith into the world, it was held that matter was evanescent, here today, anywhere tomorrow, that it might even be destroyed. Matter, energy, the things under any name that make our universe were supposed to be transitory. Superstition, black magic, and witchcraft ruled the minds of men. About the time of the Prophet Joseph Smith, discovered facts had convinced the world that matter is eternal; that energy likewise is indestructible; that we live in an everlasting universe, the elements of which will persist instead of in one that may go to pieces over night. Our recent scientific discoveries have confirmed this fundamental law. At the time when this basic doctrine was being developed by the thinking men of the world, the theologians and those who followed them, taught that man is not eternal, but that he came into his first existence when he was born on earth—that was his beginning. The view of the churches on this subject has not changed greatly to this day. In opposition to that general belief, Joseph Smith said: "Man was in the beginning with God." That is, man lived before he came upon this earth; he is an eternal being—a doctrine that the reason of men is compelling them to accept, for it seems incredible that dominating man, at the pinnacle of the things of the universe is perishable, when all else is imperishable. The Prophet also said:

"The spirit of man is not a created being. It existed from eternity and will exist throughout eternity. Anything created cannot be eternal."

Joseph Smith gave to the world a rational understanding of the origin of man.

The Purpose of Life

In the time of the Prophet Joseph Smith, it was very generally believed that man was placed on earth

almost by chance; the Lord, so to speak, flipped humanity upon the earth, there to remain in sorrow and suffering. Life's purpose, if there were one, was beyond human understanding. Under divine inspiration the "Mormon" prophet objected to this dark and depressing doctrine, conceived in untruth; and he taught that man comes upon earth in conformity with a divine and eternal purpose, one that directs or should direct every action of life. Earth-life is a school in which man learns to know the nature of material things; and trains his eternal will to accept and obey the laws of God. He acquires power by this contact and discipline and is made more fitted to continue the eternal journey with God his Father. Mortal life became glorified by the doctrine of the Book of Mormon: "Adam fell that man might be; and men are, that they might have joy." Into that remarkable sentence may be read the eternal purpose that runs through all human life. The Prophet Joseph Smith, for the first time in modern days, set forth a religious system deliberately designed to make life joyous and happy on earth as well as in the hereafter. Thus, the gospel contains principles that may be applied in the daily lives of men, such as the Word of Wisdom, providing for man's physical welfare, and the commandments to learn all truth, to be industrious, to be thrifty, and many others that provide for various phases of man's temporal nature. Things of earth and things of heaven are dear to the Lord, for all are his creations. On one occasion the Prophet said, in pursuit of this thought—and the words might well be put high on the banner of the nation: "The cause of human liberty is the cause of God." He did not speak as other men.

Life Eternal

Finally, to complete the story of human existence he laid bare anew the old and true conception of man's

life in the hereafter. The churches taught that in the future life, resurrected man would worship near the throne of God. Throughout the eternities, with the playing of the harp and with the song, the glorified ones would praise their Lord! It was static existence! It was not an inviting prospect for intelligent, active beings. The Prophet Joseph came with a different and a better message. The Lord said to him, "This is my work and my glory, to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." Immortality? Yes, that means eternal existence—we have heard of that before. Eternal life? That was new. Life means action and growth. Eternal life means everlasting action and growth. We had not heard of that before. But how the human heart warmed toward immortality when accompanied with eternal life!

Then in stately words he gave us visions of that life hereafter:

> "Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection."
>
> "If a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come."
>
> "Knowledge saves man, and in the world of spirits no man can be exalted but by knowledge."
>
> "Intelligence is the pathway up to the Gods."

Thus he taught the cycle of man's life: Man a preexistent eternal being, placed on earth for the great purpose of developing, happily, greater fitness for the eternal journey before him, and going into the hereafter to live, to act, to grow, to move upwards—and every step of the journey made progressive by additions to his intelligent knowledge, which means to act as well as to know.

A Clarifier

Such doctrines were new when the Prophet lived. The world has now borrowed many of them. Through

out his teachings he revealed new truth and made old doctrine look as if it were new by making it understandable. He said of himself, "It has always been my province to talk of hidden mysteries, new things for the world." And he said on another occasion, "That which has been hidden from before the foundation of the world is revealed to babes and sucklings in the last days." He might well be called the great clarifier in the field of religious thought.

Space does not permit us to illustrate the divine power of Joseph Smith by the many principles of truth that he taught. However, a few examples will show the untold service rendered our modern world by the teachings of the "Mormon" Prophet.

Continuous Revelation

The doctrine of continuous revelation is probably of first importance. Joseph Smith, himself, was guided, from the First Vision to his last day, by divine revelation. He believed and taught that the Lord will always reveal his will to his children as necessity demands and guide his organized Church for the benefit of the great plan of salvation. By personal visits, by the voice of angels, by the teaching of the holy Spirit, the Lord will ever be in communion with the children of men. The volume of scripture is never full. As the needs of progressive man arise, the Lord will give his help. In fact, every man must possess the spirit of revelation if he is to win salvation. Joseph said:

> "Salvation cannot come without revelation; it is in vain for any man to minister without it. No man is a minister of Jesus Christ without being a prophet. No man can be a minister of Jesus Christ except he has the testimony of Jesus, and this is the spirit of prophecy."

What a flood of light in that one paragraph!

Eternal Progression

Throughout the system of truth taught by Joseph Smith runs the doctrine of progression. Man does not stand still. He either descends or ascends; either progresses or retrogrades. Man's destiny, if he will it so, is eternal progression. Man is of the family of the Gods; he was begotten in his pre-existent state by his Heavenly Father, yet he has always been subject to the law of growth. He has risen in power and understanding throughout the ages of his existence. In words that astonish those whose eyes have not been opened to eternal truth he said with respect to human progression: "God himself was once as we are now; and is an exalted man: for Adam was created in the very fashion, image and likeness of God." Man's destiny is a God-like one. We do not worry about evolution. We have the true doctrine. The "Mormon" Prophet set forth the eternal law of progression.

Eternal Punishment

The doctrine of Joseph Smith concerning eternal punishment shows well his tremendous spiritual understanding. He cleared up the mystery of the ugliest doctrine of apostate Christianity. He set forth the true law of God's punishment of his sinful children in an understandable manner. Priests had terrorized people into believing in God, into going to church and performing its rites, by threatening them with eternal burning in a sulphurous hell. Unbaptized infants were to burn everlastingly in the pit of hell. This was not Christianity. There is no fear nor injustice in the gospel, for the gospel is based on love and justice. Joseph Smith denounced the doctrine of the burning hell. The Lord said unto him:

"Little children are redeemed from the foundation of the world through mine only Begotten, wherefore, they can not sin, for power is not given Satan to tempt

little children until they begin to become accountable unto me." And he said further:

"Eternal punishment is God's punishment; endless punishment is God's punishment."

That is, God is the master, he will punish according to the eternal laws which he uses in dealing with his children and the punishment will vary with the sin. On another occasion the Prophet declared:

"A man is his own tormentor and his own condemner. Hence the saying, They shall go into a lake that burns with fire and brimstone. The torment of disappointment in the mind of man is as exquisite as a lake burning with fire and brimstone."

The mind of the Prophet Joseph Smith was as clear as crystal. He cleared up the difficulties of the ages.

Foretelling Events

A prophet is a teacher of truth. He also, under the inspiration of God, foretells events and anticipates the discoveries of men. Such power becomes an evidence of the truthfulness of a prophet's message.

Joseph Smith was a prophet also in that sense. He foretold many events, some of which have occurred and others that are yet in the future.

The prophecy of Joseph Smith concerning the war between the Northern and the Southern states is the best known and perhaps the most striking. In 1833, he prophesied that war would come; that it would begin in South Carolina and that it would cause much bloodshed and draw many persons into battle. Nearly thirty years later, the prophecy on the Civil War was literally fulfilled. It foreshadowed also the late Great War among the most powerful nations of the world.

He prophesied that the Church would move westward and become a great people among the Rocky Mountains. Several years afterward, and after the Prophet's martyrdom, this prophecy was also fulfilled, and the expansion and power of the Latter-day Saints

in the valleys of the Rocky Mountains are but additional fulfillments of the prophecy.

Of himself, he said, before the Church was organized, and when it seemed most improbable that he would ever become widely known, that he should be spoken of for good and evil in all the world. Perhaps no man of the nineteenth century has been more devoutly loved, or more thoroughly hated, than has Joseph Smith. Books by the thousands refer to him; millions of people have taken sides for or against him. The prophecy has been fulfilled in every particular.

The many prophecies left by the Prophet form a very remarkable proof of his prophetic power. They alone would mark him as one of the great prophets of recorded history.

Anticipating Discovery

Likewise, Joseph Smith anticipated many of the fundamental discoveries that have changed immeasurably the conditions of modern life. As has already been said, he based his teachings on the doctrine of the eternal duration of the essentials of the universe. To him the things about him were real, imperishable. He said, "The elements are eternal, and spirit and matter, inseparably united, receive a fulness of joy." Modern discovery has moved rapidly towards the confirmation of this statement. In a day when superstition had not yet loosed its hold upon people, Joseph Smith laid down the doctrine of cause and effect, the foundation stone of modern science, as a doctrine of universal operation in theology as well as in physics. He said:

"There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—and when we obtain any blessings from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated."

The Prophet taught, before science had really accepted them, the fundamentals of the structure and

content of the universe. The general conceptions of modern astronomy were clearly foreshadowed in the teachings of the Prophet. For example,

> "And worlds without number have I created." "And there are many kingdoms, for there is no space in which there is no kingdom." "For behold, there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of my power." "And as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof, even so shall another come." "Their courses are fixed, even the courses of the heavens and the earth."

In the Word of Wisdom he laid down laws for bodily health which only in recent days have been worked out by science. In many other domains of thought did he make announcements that have been confirmed by the laborious studies of man. Nowhere has he been found in error. His mind swept the heavens, penetrated space, and conceived the eternal laws which govern our lives of multitudinous detail.

The Fruits of Mormonism

Turning now from the labors and teachings of Joseph Smith to the results of his work, we find like evidence of divine inspiration. The Church has been organized more than one hundred years. It is impossible to measure its effect upon human lives. The Church is designed for man's good, his whole good, and unless it improves the lives of those who obey its requirements, it has little reason for existing.

Latter-day Saints, in spite of the persecution that has followed them, are a happy people, perhaps the happiest in the world. One of the great men of the nation, in a little "Mormon" meeting house, looked into a congregation of old people, members of the "Mormon" church. His emotions were touched as he saw with the eye of experience the record of clean lives and constant happiness, written upon the furrowed faces. "These are happy people," said he, "it must be the result of your religion." Intelligent happiness, that is the best fruit of "Mormonism."

Naturally, a religion founded on the possession of intelligence would rank high in education. It has not been easy to secure leisure for study, for the Church has had to move from place to place under the pressure of persecution, and when it came West it had to pioneer the most forbidding part of the country. Food and clothes and shelter were the first stern necessities. Yet in the wilderness, schools were founded, a university was established in 1850, the oldest west of the Missouri. Today the "Mormon" people stand among the foremost in literacy and school attendance—87 percent of the children of school age attend school, as against 71 percent in the whole United States. Utah has one college student for every 99, while the United States has one for every 212 persons of population.

The Word of Wisdom has taught correct habits of living. As a result, the "Mormon" birth rate is high and the death rate is lower than for the United States. In the matter of chastity, the "Mormon" people stand highest among the states of the Union. During the first world war nearly 2,000 students of the University of Utah were examined physically for army service. Only two were afflicted with venereal disease, and one of the two had only recently come into the state.

Insanity is low among the Latter-day Saints; crime is lower than in practically any other state under similar conditions. "Mormons" form about 62 percent of the population of the state of Utah; only 29 percent of the inmates of the Utah state penitentiary are "Mormons" or of "Mormon" descent.

Loyalty to God, Church and Country is a fundamental doctrine in the teachings of Joseph Smith. The effects of this doctrine were shown in the first war when Utah stood at or near the head of the states in the practical expression of assistance to the Government in the hour of need.

When the people were driven into the wilderness,

they attacked the problems of reclamation, colonization and settlement, with the use of the principles of the gospel. They were so eminently successful that effective colonization is often coupled with "Mormonism." In practical affairs they have succeeded greatly.

Prosperous in temporal affairs, happy in spirit, healthy, chaste, intelligent, law abiding and patriotic—the members of the Church of Jesus Christ, re-established in this day of restoration through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith, form perhaps the best evidence of the claim that Joseph Smith taught truth and did work far beyond his mortal power to accomplish.

The Prophet's Followers

Not least, though last of the evidences here to be mentioned for the divine mission of Joseph Smith, is the character of the men and women who have chosen to follow Joseph Smith as a divinely inspired prophet. The Prophet himself came of New England stock. Many of his early followers were of the same stock. They were people who desired to know the truth for themselves, but whose emotions were not easily aroused, and who did not propose to be stampeded by a charlatan. The early as well as the later converts weighed carefully the validity of the Prophet's claims before joining the Church. The revival spirit was absent. Miracles were not offered to make converts. Those who joined the Church were earnest seekers after truth. God-fearing people who desired the whole gospel of Jesus Christ, people who went to God in prayer for assistance in their search. They were fearless men and women who, once knowledge had come to them, dared to face persecution, banishment from loved ones and the contempt of the world, for the sake of the pearl of great price, the eternal truth, that they had found.

Strong men gathered around the Prophet yet he was always the greatest among the members of the Church. He was a man of little worldly learning, yet

he taught the learned; he was poor in this world's goods, yet he directed the wealthy; he was despised in life, failed to win honor among men, and at last was murdered as one who menaced the welfare of society; yet thinking men, rich in fame or power or money, followed him and now follow him humbly and rejoice in his doctrine.

The successors of Joseph Smith in the presidency of the Church are but examples of the men who constitute the Church. Brigham Young, valiant and able, who, though he saw the Book of Mormon three weeks after its publication, did not join the Church until two years later, when he was thoroughly convinced of its truth, always said that he was but a disciple of Joseph Smith. John Taylor, thoughtful, scholarly, independent, followed the Prophet gladly. Wilford Woodruff, loyal, earnest, persistent, found his chief joy in testifying to the divinity of Joseph Smith's mission. Lorenzo Snow, with an appealing personality and versed in many fields, did the same. Joseph F. Smith, fearless, lover of truth, forceful and intelligent, looked upon his prophet-uncle with unfaltering devotion. Heber J. Grant, courageous, devoted, eminent in the abilities that the world rewards with gifts and honor, spent his life in the incessant preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ as restored by Joseph Smith. Any one of these men could have made for himself, by the use of his high endowments, an exalted and honored place among men. Instead, they accepted willingly the misunderstanding and near-contempt of the world that they might follow in the footsteps of Joseph Smith.

Conclusion

Many tests may be used to determine the divinity of the work of Joseph Smith. The Lord desires that men shall know for themselves of his truth. Whatever test may be applied, the "Mormon" Prophet stands out

as a marvelous personage. His own claim alone explains him. He said, "I am a rough stone. The sound of the chisel and the hammer was not heard on me until the Lord took me in hand."

President George Q. Cannon, an able writer, speaker, and thinker, for many years a leading figure in our national Congress, has voiced our feeling toward the Prophet:

"The Prophet was only a man; but he was a good man, an inspired man, a better man than he could have been without the inspiration of his Master, Christ. In all his actions he was fearless as an angel of light. Not in all that has ever been written or said of him by friend or foe is there one word to impugn the magnificent physical bravery and moral courage of Joseph Smith. Withal he was meek and gentle as a child. Disciplined by the Spirit of God which was his constant monitor, he put away from him alike the fear of men and the ambitions of the world."

Joseph Smith told the simple truth. He was divinely commissioned to do his work. Therefore, the principles and doctrines of the Church conform to all truth. Therefore, the Church has enduring vitality and power to serve mankind.

Any person who with a prayerful heart studies the life and teachings of the "Mormon" Prophet and practices the principles that he taught, will receive for himself a witness of the divine mission of Joseph Smith.

In this day, when the search for truth has become recognized as the essential of all human progress, the claims of Joseph Smith as a restorer in its fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, should be given earnest consideration by all who love truth and who desire to possess it.

Joseph Smith, was indeed a prophet of God; his mission was divine; he sought God, and God spoke to him; he did the work the Lord commanded him to do; and the Church that he was the instrument in founding, possessed of the authority of the Holy Priesthood, is engaged in carrying out God's Plan of Salvation for His earthly children.

May God bless us in our search for truth.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

Of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

1.—We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.

2.—We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression.

3.—We believe that through the atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.

4.—We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.

5.—We believe that a man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands, by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof.

6.—We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church, viz.: apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc.

7.—We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, etc.

8.—We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.

9.—We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

10.—We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion will be built upon this (the American) continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.

11.—We claim the privilege of worshipping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may.

12.—We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring and sustaining the law.

13,—We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul—we believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.

JOSEPH SMITH.